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ABSTRACT

The paper covers characteristics of Indonesia's special education program. Considered are the scope of special education, some viewpoints on the impact of culture on the perspective of special education in Indonesia (including programs, services, teacher training, and financial resources). The scope of special education is considered; and some viewpoints on the impact of culture on programs, services, teacher training, and financial resources are discussed. (SBH)

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INDONESIA
(SCOPE AND DEVELOPMENT)

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia presents a totally different picture from other South-East Asian Countries, in that it is the world's sixth most populous nation after Pakistan, is strategically located, lying between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, and is Croesus-rich in resources, largely unexploited, except in oil, and some minerals. Consisting of more than 10.000 islands and surrounded by water the Indonesian people think of water as an integral part of their homeland.

More than half of Indonesia's about 130 million people live on the fertile island of Java, with a population density averaging 1.235 per square mile, one of the highest in the world. Most of the remaining 10.000 islands are underpopulated. Indonesian Kalimantan, as big as Texas, contains slightly more than 5.000.000 people; Sumatra, full of natural resources, four times the size of Java has less than 25.000.000 people. 1)

Indonesia, a country of immensely varied physically beauty, presents to the world an appropriately symbolic setting for its history. Since about 50 years ago Indonesia has one national language, the Indonesian language, but besides that there are 200 local languages, cultures, traditions and customs which have already existed fifteen

hundred years before Christ. Indonesia, a unity in diversity, offers a prime example of complex historical, cultural, political and economic forces.

II. SCOPE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INDONESIA (DAS SEIN)

Against this background, Indonesia had to struggle to become an independent nation. When it became independent, 33 years ago, 80% of the population was illiterate. Today there is a commitment to provide educational services to all children of school age. In response to the growth of compulsory education laws, special schools and a few special classes within public schools have been established because of a realization that achievement was not only bound with the socio-economic situation of the family but also upon the inequality in the aptitude of children.

Special education in Indonesia, like in another countries, covers two aspects : 2)

- a. Learning the basic means of communication and acquiring the basic knowledge needed for social life.
- b. Learning more specialized intellectual techniques and social skills needed to stand on one's own.

There are about 130 schools for Special Education for the handicapped people in Indonesia. The different kinds of Special Education Schools are :

- "A - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the blind.

- "B - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the deaf.
- "C - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the mentally retarded; they are divided again into some sections according to the level of retardation.
- "D - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the physically handicapped.
- "D1 - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the cerebral palsy.
- "E - Schools for Special Education", meaning special schools for the socially deprived.

Most of the schools are day-centers and are mostly spread in Java. There are about 2,9 million handicapped people in Indonesia, out of which 840.000 are school age children. Only 18 Special Education Schools serving 4.750 children are provided by the government. The remaining 130 schools are privately run. 3)

Schools for Special Education are established within the school system as a segregated part. Segregation is a very up to date phenomenon in most of the sophisticated cities of Indonesia, and integration is relatively unknown in the normal school system. There are no schools of Special Education for the gifted child.

III. SOME VIEWPOINTS ON THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE PERSPECTIVE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INDONESIA (DAS SOLLEN : A DISCUSSION)

In some areas education for the handicapped is no longer viewed as a matter that only exists on the basis of charity; it has gained a status that enables the legislator to consider it as a valid contender for a fair share of public funds. Some areas especially in big cities are very advanced; in these cases government and society have accepted the existence of public institutions specified for the care of the handicapped. But unfortunately this is not the case in some rural communities. Unequal social and economic development in many areas of Indonesia ought to be considered as a cause of differences in the attitude of the society toward the handicapped.

How should Indonesia plan its special education strategy in the future against the background of Indonesian life and culture ? Let us look at Indonesian realities and trends.

.. The overall impression from Rehabilitation International World Commission on Special Education discussions at the Manila meeting in 1978 is that integration (also known as mainstreaming in the United States), is considered desirable and feasible as a trend through out the world. However especially for Indonesia many questions remain open, e.g.: to what extent would it be effective in Indonesia's culture at this "modern age" ?

To whom does it refer in terms of degree and kind of handicap, 4) and how should it be implemented within the organizational structure of Indonesia's educational system, which has its own trends and traditions ?

From an overall view about integration, it can be said that the right to education which has led to the right of the handicapped to be integrated with the non-handicapped in the school-system of the advanced countries, seems to involve a continuum of varying degrees of integration depending on the degree of the needs of the child as dictated by his handicap, from full integration in the ordinary classes within ordinary schools to separate special schools with some variation on above mentioned divisions. In some areas of Indonesia some handicapped children have been mainstreamed (integrated) because of the inability of the school system to provide special services; yet the concept of mainstreaming as a movement is practically unknown.

- The government of Indonesia has to face many problems in the educational field.
- Compulsory education for the school age child brought with it many problems for Indonesia, many of which arise from the raising demands and insufficient facilities.
- Programs have been organized to fulfill the shortage of teachers and school facilities, thus increasing the number and as well as the competence of teachers. 5)
- Indonesia, long before it was exposed to Indian, Chinese, and

Western cultural influences, had already developed a distinct culture of its own. By the time exposure to outside influences occurred, the Indonesians had already developed rice cultivation with irrigated rice fields; domesticated the ox and buffalo; had their own theater; highly developed music in the form of the "gamelan orchestra", and had^{been} producing fine batik textiles with intricate designs and patterns.

- The Indonesian life is designed for harmony.

The philosophy of helping each other (gotong royong) is deeply embedded in the life of Indonesian people, especially in the villages. This spirit is nourished by the culture in which it flourishes and in which education is the instrument to implement and put into practice the ideals by which it lives. Indonesia upholds the principle that men are created equal, this principle, however, does not imply that every individual could profit equally from identical educational programs. But with "gotong royong", equality of opportunity will remove every artificial barrier so that the individual can amount to as much as his effort, ability and character would permit.

The following suggestions are general opinions and viewpoints which are indicative of new trends in special education in a developing country like Indonesia.

Programs

Special Educational programs should be based upon a differential approach, this means that a wide variety of services in a number

of alternative settings, can be developed at different sequences and rates, due to the differences of resources and stage of educational development of each area. The ideal situation is one where programme development is based upon a case-by-case-evaluation. This means that measurable objectives at each level of development for each kind of handicap as well as kind and degree of exception should be determined. It means also that all exceptional children consequently will profit from the implementation of these approaches.

Accountability should be emphasized in the masterplan of such an education program. 6)

S e r v i c e s

Special education services is not only a concern of the school system nor of the government alone. Public awareness has to be aroused in order to make possible the implementation of the programmes. These programmes has to be adjusted to the changing needs of society, an involvement which causes two-sided experiences as a base to set up and develop continuously new services while recognizing social sources available. Responsibility and potential contribution from voluntary workers and organizations should be encouraged.

T e a c h e r T r a i n i n g

Teachers should be equipped with techniques and professional competencies. Teacher' Schools for Special Education should be directed toward practical classroom activities based upon

situations on how a child experiences his world. There should be an unique way of treating each handicapped child differently according to his need.

Financial Resources

Special Educational Programs cannot be seen seperated from the whole educational program of the area and should be related also with the social and economic development of the region. A long range plan and systematic program should be developed where each objective should be stated, based upon the background of need, life-style and development of the community. In this case financial resources from the state as well as from the community could be available.

IV. C O N C L U S I O N

The educational trend of each country has to be recognized and seen against the background of the life and culture of the Nation. Integration as well as mainstreaming is a trend in the educational field of special education, though increasing the interaction among non handicapped and handicapped people is not the only alternative in providing equality of opportunity and the right kind of education for the handicapped child.

A "differential approach" which includes services in a number of alternative settings and is based upon involvement of the school system, government, community and the child's world put into practice the spirit of the philosophy of the Indonesian people.-

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A B S T R A C T

(Special Education in Indonesia)

Indonesia, consists of more than 10,000 islands and has a population of 130 million people with about 200 local languages and cultures.

Indonesia upholds the principle that men are created equal, which however does not imply that every individual could profit equally from identical programs.

A program development should be based upon a case-by-case evaluation with measurable objectives at each level of development for each kind of handicap and degree of exception. A differential approach which includes services in a number of alternative settings and is based upon involvement of the school system, government, community and child's world is the answer for Indonesian lifestyle and culture.

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